

2019-06-03

# Public Humanities and Research Impact

Welzenbach, Rebecca

<https://dx.doi.org/10.7302/816>

<https://hdl.handle.net/2027.42/167139>

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# Rebecca Welzenbach (Becky) | Research Impact Librarian



[rwelzenb@umich.edu](mailto:rwelzenb@umich.edu)

734-615-0038

Office: Hatcher 260A

I empower scholars to create the conditions under which they can establish:

- a strong public identity,
- a coherent account of their contributions to the scholarly enterprise,
- and a persuasive body of evidence for the impact of their work within the academy,
- ...and for the public.

**The shorter version: I help scholars present themselves and their work to the world.**

Along with other librarians and informationists from across the U-M Library, I coordinate the library's role in research impact initiatives on campus.

# Where did I come from?



- Michigan Publishing
  - Digital Publishing Coordinator (2010-2012)
  - Text Creation Partnership (2010-2014)
  - Journals Coordinator (2013-2015)
  - Lever Press (2014-2017)
  - Director, Strategic Integration and Partnerships (2015-2017)

Themes: open access, digital scholarship, usage/metrics, innovative business models/partnerships for producing & preserving scholarship, telling the story of why our scholarship matters

What are we talking about when we talk about research impact?

# What are we talking about when we talk about research impact?

Four types of research impact definitions:

- as “the demonstrable contribution that excellent research makes to **society and the economy**”(the Research Councils United Kingdom)
- as “an effect on, change or benefit to the **economy, society, culture, public policy or services, health, the environment or quality of life, beyond academia**” (the Higher Education Funding Council for England and the Research Excellence Framework)
- as measurable influences in the form of **quantifiable data such as citation frequency** (bibliometric definitions)
- as the influences of research results on the **knowledge and actions of researchers and policymakers** (use-based definitions).

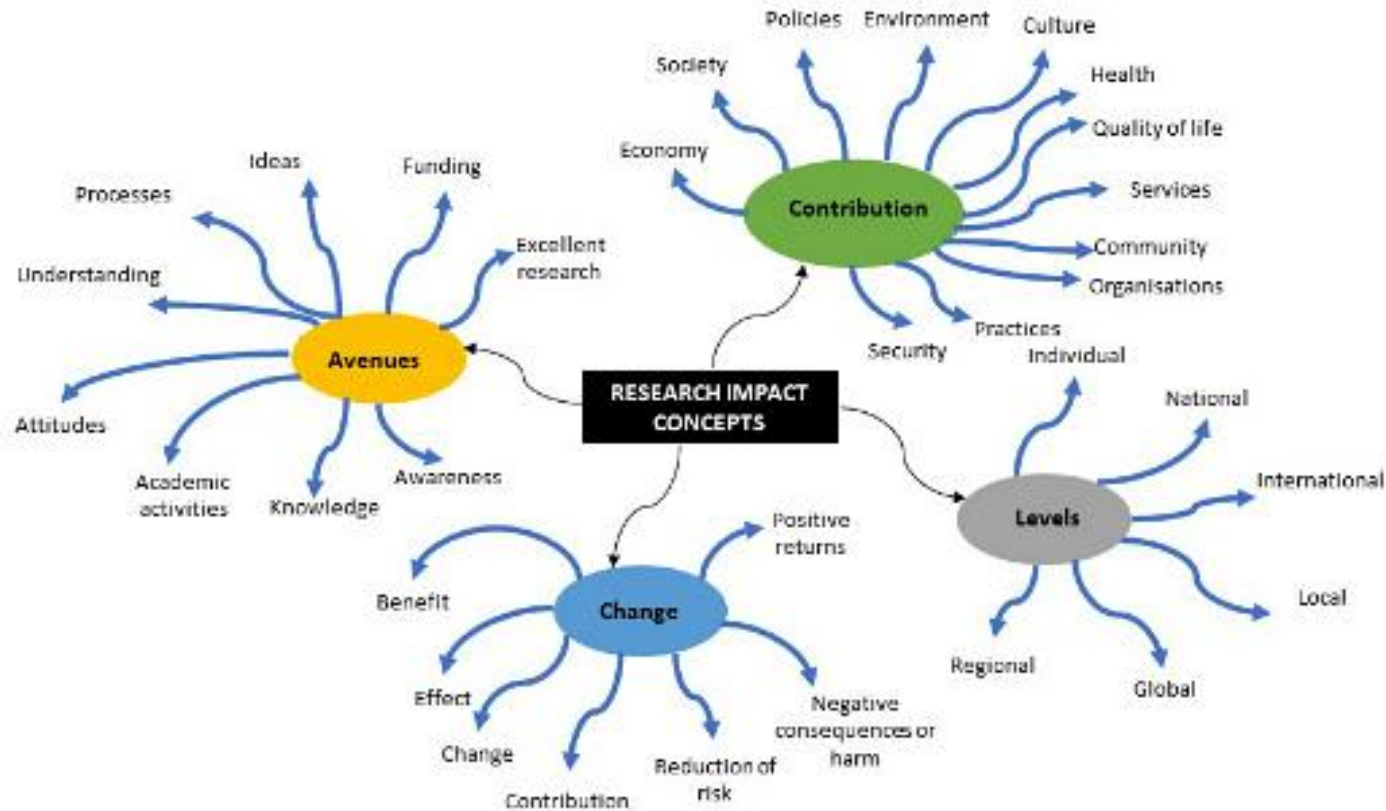
Four domains that underpinned the research impact concepts reviewed:

- *contribution* (the areas of research influence; e.g. economy, policies)
- *avenues* of impact (processes by which research could have impact; e.g. effects on knowledge, attitudes)
- *change* (synonyms used to describe “effects” or “benefits”)
- *levels* of impact (e.g. national, international).

Source:

<https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/impactofsocialsciences/2018/01/09/the-concept-of-research-impact-pervades-contemporary-academic-discourse-but-what-does-it-actually-mean/>

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## Discussion: What will it mean for your project to have impact?

- How will you know if your project has been a success?
- What would you like to be able to say about your project in...
  - six months?
  - one year?
  - five years?

## Activity:

Draft one or more hypothetical/potential statements of impact for your project, bearing in mind the four domains we just looked at (avenues, contributions, levels, and change)

Ex.: Through a series of workshops, this project will raise awareness among parents and educators of gaps in literacy in school-age children in Washtenaw County



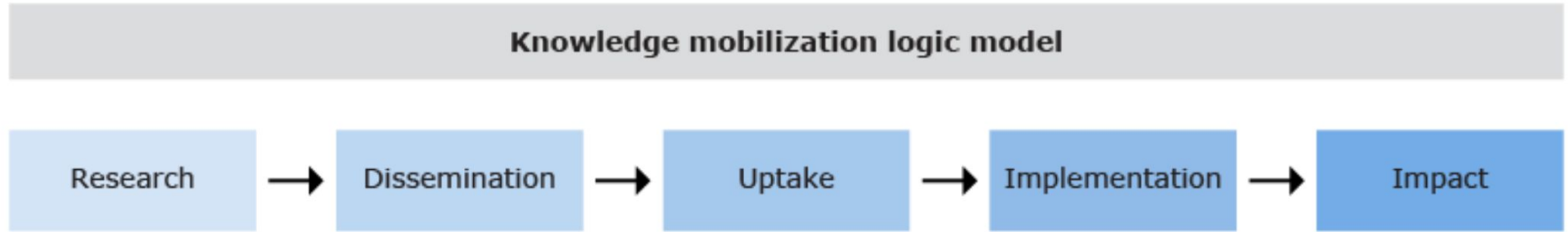
# Knowledge Mobilization Logic Model

## Traditional Knowledge mobilization logic model



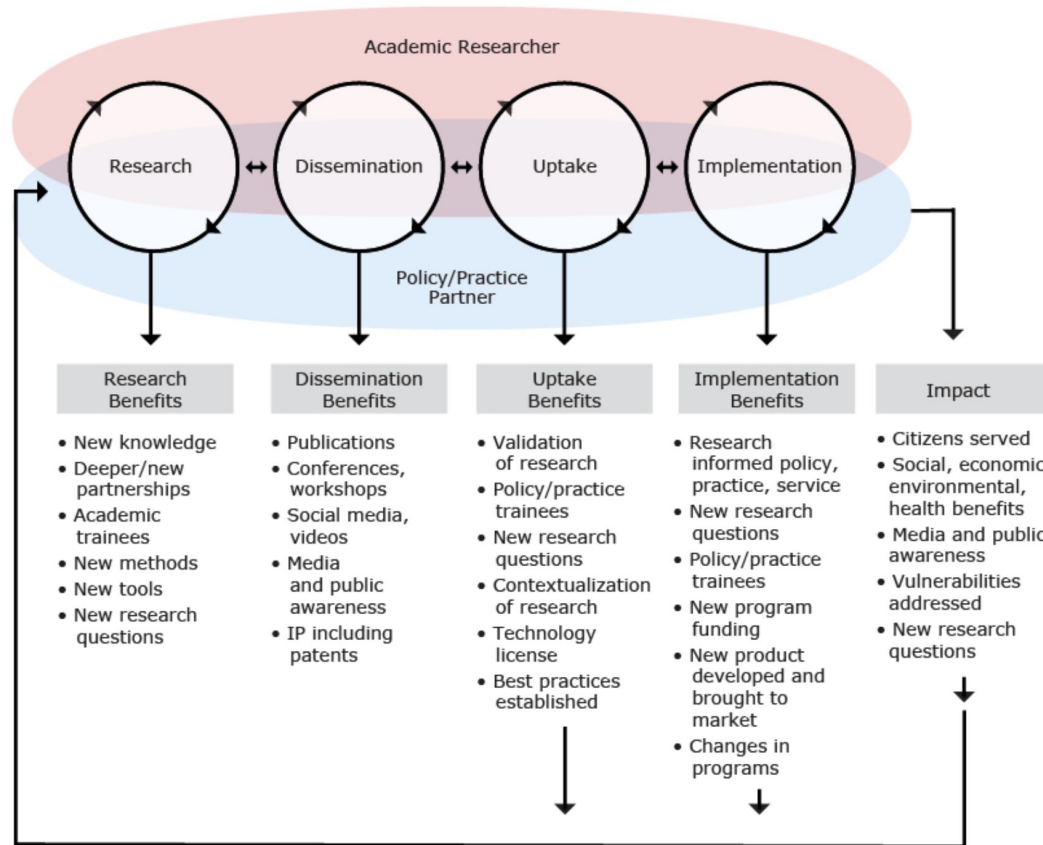
Phipps, D., Pepler, D., Craig, W., Cumming J., & Cardinal, S. (2016). The co-produced pathway to impact describes knowledge mobilization processes. *Journal of Community Engagement and Scholarship*.

# (revised) Knowledge Mobilization Logic Model



Phipps, D., Pepler, D., Craig, W., Cumming J., & Cardinal, S. (2016). The co-produced pathway to impact describes knowledge mobilization processes. *Journal of Community Engagement and Scholarship*.

# Knowledge Mobilization Co-Produced Pathway to Impact

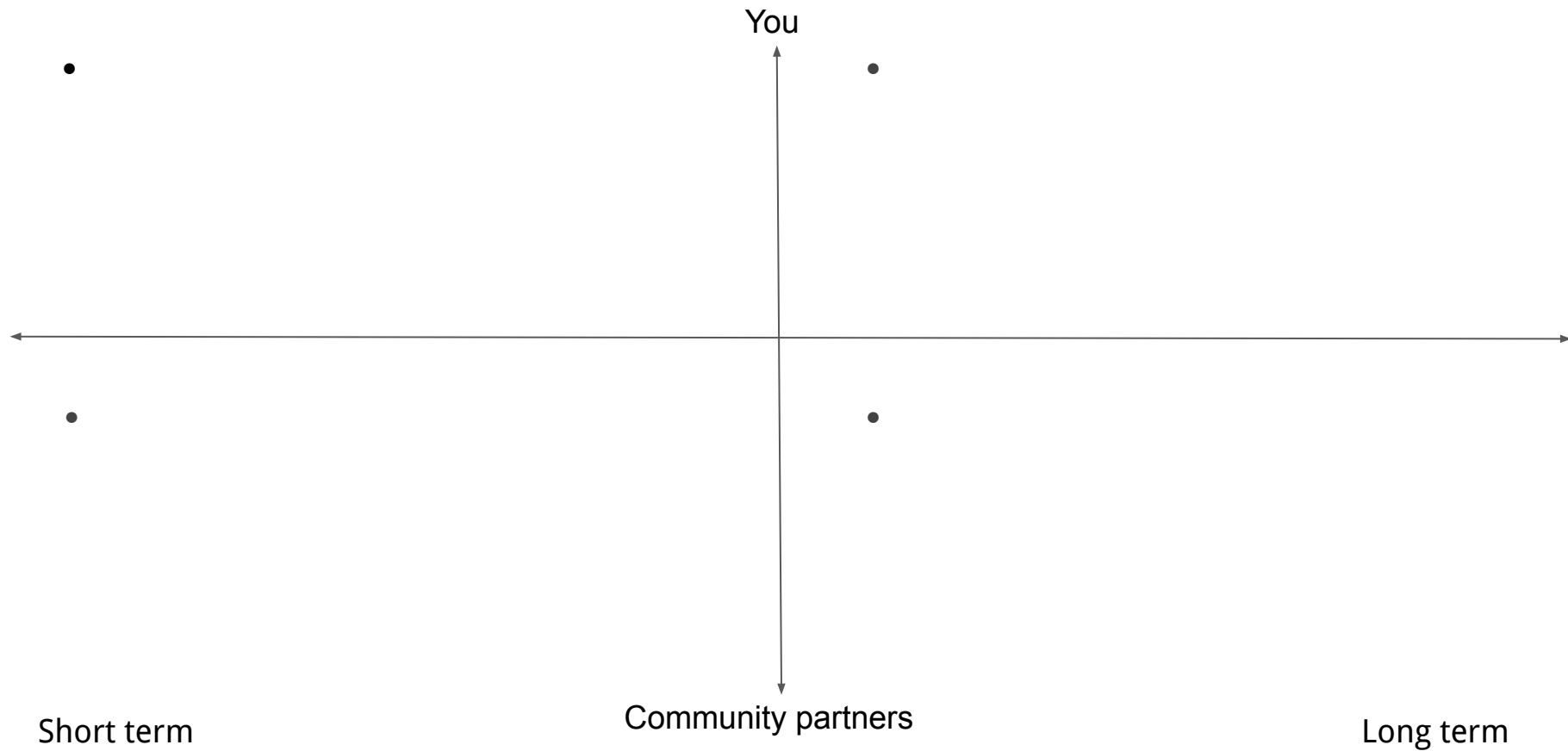


Phipps, D., Pepler, D., Craig, W., Cumming J., & Cardinal, S. (2016). The co-produced pathway to impact describes knowledge mobilization processes. *Journal of Community Engagement and Scholarship*.

## Activity: Where does your project fit in this logic model?

- What “step” in the process is it?
- Does the language of the Public Engagement Framework provide any useful terminology or framing?
- What benefits do you imagine--for your community partners as well as for your own ongoing work?

## Activity: Identify benefits



# Gathering the Evidence

Qualitative



Quantitative



# Make a Plan: What do you need?

Now that you've thought about what evidence you want to gather, take some time to plan out what you'll need to build, borrow, create, set up, etc., to ensure that this evidence is gathered/generated throughout the course of your project.

Examples:

- Create a survey
- Registration form
- Feedback form
- Contact email/phone number
- Sign-in sheets
- Plan to circle back after the activity
- Progress/growth over time?

# Sources & Resources

## Readings:

- Phipps, D., Pepler, D., Craig, W., Cumming J., & Cardinal, S. (2016). The co-produced pathway to impact describes knowledge mobilization processes. Journal of Community Engagement and Scholarship.
- "The concept of research impact pervades contemporary academic discourse – but what does it actually mean?" LSE Impact Blog. January 9, 2018.

## Library Research Guides:

- [Research Impact Challenge](#)
- [Research Impact Assessment \(health sciences\)](#)

Contact the library for help with tools like: Qualtrics, Google Forms, and more!



## Get ready for next week:

- Share/workshop your draft research impact plans
- Targeting your (research impact) audience: who is all of this information for?